

Conclusion

An effective K–12 foreign language program that articulates with postsecondary programs requires careful curriculum planning, cooperation among members of the community, and a deep commitment to developing the capabilities of students to their full potential. These objectives can indeed be accomplished.

This framework provides guidelines for designing and implementing foreign language programs for students from kindergarten through the twelfth grade. All guidelines are based on one primary language goal: that graduating students are “equipped linguistically and culturally to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad” (National Standards 7).

This framework highlights a number of implications for expanded standards-driven foreign language education, which encompasses the goals of communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. These implications include the following aims:

- more foreign language teachers;
- K–12 foreign language certification;
- ongoing, updated professional development opportunities for foreign language teachers;
- opportunities beyond the traditional classroom for students to practice language skills in order to develop a high level of proficiency in a foreign language;
- authentic content-relevant materials that serve a standards-driven curriculum;
- more nontraditional instructional resources, such as e-mail and electronic media;
- alignment of high school and postsecondary foreign language programs to meet the needs of students who have benefited from an extended and articulated sequence of study; and
- collaboration between the State Department of Education and postsecondary institutions in designing teacher preparation programs and college placement tests.

To bring about standards-driven foreign language education for every student in every grade in South Carolina will require the collaborative efforts of students, parents, teachers, administrators, state personnel, business people, publishers, legislators, and other interested members of the community. All must work together, diligently and creatively, in the planning, implementing, and funding of foreign language programs. That is the only sure way for us to meet the challenges of the new millennium.